

Lesson Plan for Lesson 24

Social Justice

Preparation and Supplies

- Study chapter 24, “Social Justice,” in the handbook.
- Gather a variety of magazines and newspapers for each group of three or four; and a marker for each group of three or four. Gather sheets of newsprint, scissors, tape or glue, one of each for each group of six to eight; a variety of newspapers and magazines for each group of six to eight; and a Bible. Also gather four extra sheets of newsprint and write each of the following phrases at the top of a separate sheet: “The Common Good,” “Responsibility of the Political Authority,” “Human Dignity,” and “Human Solidarity.”
- Make copies of the handout “Key Concepts Underlying Catholic Social Teaching” (Document #: TX003407), one for each participant.

Pray It! (5 minutes)

Tell the participants that class is going to begin with a prayer for justice. **Select** three volunteers to each read from the three sections of Psalm 17. **Instruct** the participants to respond “Hear, O Lord, my plea for justice” after each section is read.

Study It! (35 to 45 minutes, depending on your class length)

A. Social Justice

1. **Direct** the participants to form groups of three or four. **Distribute** a marker and a variety of magazines and newspapers to each group. **Tell** the young people to look through the articles in the magazines and newspapers to find one that addresses a social justice issue. **Ask** them to circle the article. **Invite** each group to name and describe the issue their article discusses.
2. **Direct** the participants to read the chapter introduction and the section “Social Justice,” on pages 264–267 in the handbook. The content covers points 1 through 4 on the handout “Lesson 24 Summary” (Document #: TX003406).
3. **(Optional) Direct** the young people to the Reflect questions on page 267 in the handbook and **lead** a discussion on local and global social justice issues.

B. Catholic Social Teaching Principles

1. **Ask** the young people to return to their groups. **Tell** the groups to brainstorm various acts of justice and service that would respond to the social justice issue they identified in the magazine or



newspaper article they circled in the activity in section A, above. **Invite** volunteers from each group to share their ideas with the rest of the class.

2. **Direct** the participants to read the section “Catholic Social Teaching Principles,” on pages 267–272 in the handbook. The content covers point 5 on the “Lesson 24 Summary.”
3. *(Optional)* **Invite** questions and observations on the content. You might also invite discussion on the Reflect questions on page 269 in the handbook.

C. Service and Justice

Direct the participants to read the section “Service and Justice,” on page 273 in the handbook. The content covers points 6 through 8 on the handout “Lesson 24 Summary.”

Note: If you are running short on time, you may wish to just briefly summarize this section of the handbook.

Live It! (15 to 20 minutes)

1. **Post** side by side the four sheets of newsprint that contain the foundational principles of social justice. Distribute the handout “Key Concepts Underlying Catholic Social Teaching” (Document #: TX003407). **Begin** by selecting a participant to read the paragraph on the common good from the handout. Then **ask** the young people to brainstorm some local and global issues that are hurting the common good. **List** their answers on the newsprint. Continue the process again with the next concept on the handout until you have covered all four concepts.

Explain the directions for the last three concepts as follows:

- *Responsibility of the Political Authority:* Give concrete examples of how the local or national government, as a political authority, takes responsibility for justice in society.
- *Human Dignity:* Brainstorm the various ways our culture deprives people of their dignity.
- *Human Solidarity:* Brainstorm groups of people who suffer or who deserve better treatment, but whose needs mainstream society might neglect out of ignorance, prejudice, or indifference.

List the participants’ responses on the appropriate sheets of newsprint.

2. **Direct** the participants to form groups of six to eight. **Assign** each group one of the four key concepts of Catholic social teaching and give each group the corresponding sheet of newsprint. **Distribute** to each group a sheet of newsprint, scissors, tape or glue, and a variety of newspapers and magazines.

Explain the task as follows:

- Each group is to use the newspapers and magazines to create a collage that illustrates its key concept in some way, illustrates the social injustices listed on the newsprint, or offers a solution to the injustices.
3. After the groups have had time to complete their collage, **ask** a representative from each group to explain how the group’s collage addresses its specific principle.



Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Following any announcements, **direct** the participants to the Pray It! “Praying with Dorothy Day,” on page 267 in the handbook. **Select** a volunteer to read Matthew 25:31–40. Close by **leading** the young people in praying together the prayer by Dorothy Day.

